

VZCZCXRO2589
OO RUEHROV RUEHTRO
DE RUEHKH #1077 2661518
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 231518Z SEP 09
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4453
INFO RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE
RHMFIS/CJTF HOA

UNCLAS KHARTOUM 001077

NSC FOR MGAVIN, LETIM
DEPT PLS PASS USAID FOR AFR/SUDAN
ADDIS ABABA ALSO FOR USAU

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: ASEC PGOV PREL KPKO SOCI AU UNSC SU

SUBJECT: UNAMID NOT PERMITTED ACCESS TO CONDUCT ASSESSMENT OF KORMA,
NORTH DARFUR, FOLLOWING SAF-REBEL CLASHES

REF: KHARTOUM 1035

¶1. (SBU) UNAMID sources reported on September 23 that the UN has not yet conducted a security assessment of Korma, North Darfur, following unconfirmed reports of clashes between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and Darfuri rebels aligned with Sudanese Liberation Army/Abdul Wahid (SLA/AW). According to an official in the UN Department of Safety and Security, UNAMID has attempted to reach the area since the clashes last week. However, Government of Sudan (GOS) officials in the North Darfur capital of El Fasher continue to prevent any UN travel to the area on the grounds that the SAF is conducting an ongoing military operation there (Note: The GOS customarily prohibits UNAMID and international NGO travel to areas of conflict well after the conflict has ceased. End note.)

¶2. (SBU) On September 23, a UNAMID spokesperson was unable to confirm numbers quoted by leaders of internally displaced persons that 75 villages were looted and over 20 civilians were killed in SAF attacks on rebel-held territory in North Darfur. Additionally, SLA/AW rebel leaders in the area were not available by satellite phone when Poloff attempted to confirm or refute the claims made in the press by the Paris-based leadership of SLA/AW.

¶3. (SBU) Comment: The GOS regularly denies UNAMID access to conduct on-the-ground security assessments following any fighting among the various armed parties in Darfur. As seen in Jebel Marra frequently over the last two years, and in Wadaa, North Darfur, last February, the UN has limited visibility throughout Darfur due to the inability of senior UNAMID leadership to obtain access to rebel-held areas. In contrast, thanks to the regular flow of information that emerged from Um Barro, North Darfur, in May, and Muhajeriya, South Darfur, in January, UN senior leadership succeeded in making timely policy decisions that restricted the scale and scope of SAF retaliation. It can be argued that this, in turn, limited the number of civilian casualties. End Comment.

¶4. (U) Post will provide updates via septels as information becomes available on this most recent round of fighting in North Darfur.

WHITEHEAD